



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: HCFA Press Office
(202) 690-6145

MEDICARE BENEFICIARIES AFFECTED BY MANAGED CARE PLAN WITHDRAWAL SHOULD RESEARCH THEIR OPTIONS NOW FOR CHOICES IN THE FALL

Washington - **Insert health plan name** has decided not to renew its health care contract with Medicare at the end of 2000. While beneficiaries currently enrolled in plan name will continue to be covered by the Medicare program, these individuals will need to know their options and make choices about how they receive their health care in the coming year.

"Medicare beneficiaries who are affected by plans leaving Medicare should remember that no matter what, they are still covered by a strong Medicare program. And most people who are enrolled in these plans do not need to do anything right now," said HCFA Administrator Nancy-Ann DeParle. "They should wait until they receive a letter from their managed care plan later this fall. They need to remember that their current managed care plan is required to cover them until December 31, 2000."

Plan name is required to send all affected beneficiaries an information package by October 2, 2000 that explains beneficiaries' options to return to the original Medicare plan (fee-for-service) or to enroll in another Medicare+Choice organization, if one is available. All beneficiaries have the option of returning to original fee-for-service Medicare and may choose to buy supplemental coverage to fill the gaps. Beneficiaries also have the option of enrolling in another Medicare+Choice organization, managed care or private fee-for-service plan, if one is available in their community.

"We understand that the withdrawal from Medicare of managed care plans causes disruptions. To ease this transition, Medicare is committed to ensuring that beneficiaries have useful information about their options, rights and protections," added Administrator DeParle. "I encourage people to call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) or log onto www.medicare.gov for additional information."

In addition to contacting Medicare, beneficiaries can call their State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) for assistance. The customer service representative at 1-800-MEDICARE can provide the toll free number for the local SHIP office. They can also contact the U.S. Administration on Aging's toll-free Elder Care Locator at 1-800-677-1116 to be referred to their local area agency on aging.